

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7698

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY SAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 311

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GABORONE 0324

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFORN PINS MILI BC SA RH AO UR

SUBJECT: BOTSWANA: IMPACT OF DETERIORATING REGIONAL SECURITY
ON U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET AND CUBAN MILITARY EXPANSION INTO ANGOLA
HAS CAUSED A MAJOR DETERIORATION IN THE REGIONAL SECURITY SITUATION,
SUBSTANTIALLY DIMINISHED PROSPECTS FOR EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE AND THUS
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THREATENS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR POLICY OBJECTIVES IN BOTSWANA.

THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION IS LACK OF ANY FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN APARTHEID, SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTINUED ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF NAMIBIA AND OPPOSITION OF SMITH REGIME TO MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA EVEN IN THE FACT OF PREPARATION FOR MAJOR ESCALATION OF GUERRILLA WARFARE. MAJOR NEW DIPLOMATIC MOVES ARE NEEDED TO RESOLVE THESE ISSUES IN ORDER TO AVERT LARGE-SCALE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AND TO PROTECT U.S. INTEREST IN BOTSWANA AND THE REGION AS A WHOLE. END SUMMARY.

2. OUR POLICY OF ASSISTING BOTSWANA TO DEVELOP AS A STABLE, DEMOCRATIC, MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY IN HOPES IT CAN EXERCISE ITS INFLUENCE FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA CONTINUES TO HOLD SOME VALIDITY, BUT MAJOR NEW DIPLOMATIC MOVES WILL BE REQUIRED TO AVOID AN ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN THE REGION. SOVIET AND CUBAN SUCCESSES IN ANGOLA HAVE CAUSED A SUBSTANTIAL DETERIORATION IN THE SECURITY SITUATION WITH SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR LANDLOCKED BOTSWANA.

3. THE LEVEL OF FRUSTRATION AND ANXIETY AMONG SENIOR GOB OFFICIALS ABOUT SOUTHERN AFRICA HAS CERTAINLY BEEN HEIGHTENED. IN SOUTH AFRICA BOTSWANA SEES NO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN RACIAL OPPRESSION AS RACIAL TENSION MOUNTS WITH FLASHES OF VIOLENCE. PRESIDENT KHAMA FEELS THAT HIS EFFORTS TO WORK OUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE IN COOPERATION WITH PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND OTHERS HAS BEEN FRUSTRATED ESSENTIALLY BY THE CONTINUED INTRANSIGENCE OF RHODESIAN PRIME MINISTER SMITH EVEN IN THE FACE OF PREPARATION FOR A MASSIVE ESCALATION IN GUERRILLA WARFARE POSSIBLY BACKED BY SOVIETS AND CUBANS. THE GOB IS CONCERNED ABOUT INADEQUATE PROGRESS TOWARDS SELF-DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA AND THE PROBABILITY OF STEPPED UP SWAPO GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES WHICH COULD SPILL OVER INTO BOTSWANA. SOUTH AFRICA'S MILITARY ADVANCE INTO ANGOLA COMBINED WITH THE SAG DRAFT DEFENSE AMENDMENT BILL AUTHORIZING MILITARY OPERATIONS ANYWHERE SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR IS SEEN HERE AS A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S POLICY OF NON-INTERFERENCE

IN THE AFFAIRS OF NEIGHBORING STATES AND A POTENTIAL THREAT TO BOTSWANA'S FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.

4. SINCE BOTSWANA IS VIRTUALLY SURROUNDED BY SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA, THE DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSIDERED AS A CRITICAL FACTOR AFFECTING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF U.S. OVERALL POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THE COUNTRY. AN ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE ESPECIALLY IN RHODESIA WOULD HAVE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON BOTSWANA. A MAJOR INFLUX OF REFUGEES WOULD TAX EXISTING SHORT FOOD SUPPLIES AND BOTSWANA'S LIMITED INFRASTRUCTURE; IT WOULD PRESENT A SERIOUS SECURITY PROBLEM FOR THE GOVERNMENT. PHYSICAL VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD SERIOUSLY DISRUPT BOTSWANA'S ECONOMY SINCE THE COUNTRY IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON SOUTH AFRICA AS A SOURCE OF SUPPLY,

AS A MARKET AND FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

5. I BELIEVE THE GOB WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO WORK FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA SINCE ITS NATIONAL SURVIVAL WOULD BE AT STAKE IN ANY VIOLENT SOLUTION. HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF ACCELERATED PROGRESS IN MEETING BLACK DEMANDS FOR SELF-DETERMINATION, HUMAN DIGNITY AND RACIAL EQUALITY, AN ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IS INEVITABLE; AND BOTSWANA WILL COME UNDER HEAVY OAU PRESSURE TO ALLOW ITS TERRITORY TO BE USED AS A LAUNCHING PAD AGAINST NEIGHBORING MINORITY-RULED REGIMES. AS A MATTER OF POLICY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WOULD RESIST THESE PRESSURES, BUT ITS SMALL PARAMILITARY FORCE OF 400 MEN DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY TO POLICE THE COUNTRY'S LONG BORDERS WITH RHODESIA, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA.

6. BOTSWANA'S INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION COULD BE AGGRAVATED PARTICULARLY BY INFLUX OF REFUGEES AND BY BORDER INCURSIONS OF GUERRILLAS AND INTELLIGENCE AGENTS.

7. BOTSWANA HAS EXPERIENCED VERY RAPID DEVELOPMENT, BUT A NUMBER OF POTENTIALLY DESTABILIZING FACTORS EXIST. ECONOMIC GROWTH HERE HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY EXTREME DUALISM, WIDE INCOME DISPARITIES AND INADQUATE INVESTMENT CAPITAL TO GENERATE SUFFICIENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO ABSORB THE GROWTH IN THE LABOR FORCE. THE EROSION OF REAL WAGES BY INFLATION COMBINED WITH LOCALIZATION PRESSURE, THE GOVERNMENT'S INCOMES POLICY, ACUTE HOUSING SHORTAGE AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH HAS GENERATED SOME LABOR UNREST IN URBAN CENTERS. THIS SITUATION COULD BE FURTHER AGGRAVATED BY A CONTINUED SHIFT OF THE RURAL POPULATION OF URBAN CENTERS, FINANCIAL STRINGENCY AND THE EMERGENCE OF XENOPHOBIA. A TENDENCY EXISTS FOR SOME RADICAL LABOR ORGANIZERS AND OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES TO EXPLOIT UNDERLYING UNREST TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. THESE GROUPS MAY WELL BE ATTRACTED TO COMMUNIST SUPPORT IF THE PRESENT

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TREND TOWARD SOVIET DOMINATION AND INFLUENCE CONTINUE. THE PRESIDENT HAS REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT DISSIDENT NATIONALIST ACTIVITY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.(

8. OUR AID, PEACE CORPS, TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL IN BOTSWANA IN ITS DEVELOPMENT AS A STABLE, DEMOCRATIC, MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY. THESE PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN COMPLEMENTARY AND SUPPORTIVE TO OUR POLICY OF "COMMUNICATION" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA TO ENCOURAGE PEACEFUL CHANGE. THEY SHOULD OF COURSE BE CONTINUED IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN ONE AREA OF STABILITY IN WHAT IS OTHERWISE A BLEAK AND STORMY OUTLOOK IN NEIGHBORING MINORITY-RULED TERRITORIES.

9. AS I SEE IT, SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN THE REGION HAS CLEARLY DIMINISHED PROSPECTS FOR EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE. THE PACE OF

PEACEFUL CHANGE MUST BE QUICKENED TO AVERT FURTHER VIOLENCE. IT IS
QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS WOULD HAVE GONE INTO

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 GABORONE 0324

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

ANGOLA WITH SUCH MASSIVE MILITARY SUPPORT FOR THE MPLA IF
FUNDAMENTAL PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN ELIMINATING APARTHEID,
SOUTH AFRICA'S ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF NAMIBIA AND IN RESOLVING THE
RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL DISPUTE ON THE BASIS OF MAJORITY RULE.
FAILURE TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THESE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE
IS SEEN BY BOTSWANA AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE FRAGILE SECURITY-

POLITICAL BALANCE IN THE REGION AND MUST BE RESOLVED IN THE INTEREST
OF PEACE. IN THE PRESENT SITUATION MOST AFRICANS SEE THE PRIME
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ENEMY AS MINORITY-RULED REGIMES AND NOT THE SOVIET UNION. THEY
SIMPLY DO NOT VIEW INCREASING SOVIET PENETRATION IN BROAD STRATEGIC
BALANCE OF POWER TERMS AND FEEL THEY CAN HANDLE THE SOVIETS. IF
THE RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN ISSUES ARE NOT RESOLVED IN A TIMELY
PEACEFUL MANNER, BOTSWANA WILL BE FORCED TO ACCOMMODATE ITSELF TO
THE OAU POSITION ON MANY ISSUES AND GIVE MORAL SUPPORT TO OPTION 2
OF THE LUSAKA MANIFESTO IF NEGOTIATIONS FAIL. A DETERIORATION IN
REGIONAL SECURITY WOULD AMONG OTHER THINGS JEOPARDIZE OUR INVESTMENT
IN BOTSWANA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND OPEN UP
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER COMMUNIST PENETRATION AND DOMINATION IN
THE REGION.

10. IN MY VIEW, U.S. INTEREST IN THE REGION AS A WHOLE CAN BEST
BE PROTECTED BY CLEARLY GETTING ON THE SIDE OF CHANGE AND ACCELERATING

PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING HUMAN DIGNITY, SELF-DETERMINATION AND RACIAL
EQUALITY. ACCORDINGLY WE COULD:

(A) USE OUR INFLUENCE IN COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA, EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY AND KEY BLACK AFRICAN STATES TO PROMOTE A QUICK FIX
IN RHODESIA.

(B) EXERT ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA TO PERMIT TIMELY
SELF-DETERMINATION IN NAMIBIA UNDER UN SUPERVISION.

(C) EXPLAIN TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT APARTHEID HAS CLEARLY BECOME A
YOKE AROUND THE NECK OF THE WESTERN WORLD AND DAMAGING TO OUR
BROADER INTERESTS. THEY MUST START A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE WITH
URBAN BLACKS AND MAKE SOME FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN THE APARTHEID
SYSTEM.

(D) CONTINUE TO AVOID STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS WHICH CREATE THE
PERCEPTION THAT THE U.S. "IS HOBNOBBING WITH THE ENEMY" AND A
DE FACTO ALLY OF SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA.

(E) CONTINUE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO GET THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS OUT OF
ANGOLA WHICH INCIDENTALLY WOULD BE MUCH EARIER IF PROGRESS COULD
BE MADE ESPECIALLY ON THE RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN ISSUES.

(F) BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT TO ASSIST
REFUGEES IN BOTSWANA IN THE EVENT OF ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE IN
NEIGHBORING TERRITORIES.

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